

Adventure

Adventure stories for young adults are stories of survival, with young characters cut off from adults by natural disaster, war, and even nuclear holocaust. The genre occasionally blends with science fiction or historical fiction, but the theme is always teens discovering hidden strengths as they struggle to manage on their own in dire circumstances. Readers who enjoy adventure fiction may also enjoy exciting popular nonfiction such as *Into Thin Air* or *The Perfect Storm*.

Popular Authors and Titles

R **RA** **H** **NH**

Caroline B. Cooney (<i>Flash Fire</i>)				
John Gilstrap (<i>Nathan's Run</i>)				
Jean Hegland (<i>Into the Forest</i>) M				
Will Hobbs (<i>Downriver</i>)				
Stephen King (<i>The Girl Who Loved Tom Gordon</i>)				
John Marsden (<i>Tomorrow, When the War Began</i>)				
Ben Mikaelson (<i>Touching Spirit Bear</i>)				
Pat Murphy (<i>Wild Angel</i>)				
Walter Dean Myers (<i>Fallen Angels</i>)				
Robert C. O'Brien (<i>Z for Zachariah</i>)				
Gary Paulsen (<i>Hatchet</i>)				
Roland Smith (<i>The Last Lobo</i>)				
Joyce Sweeney (<i>Free Fall</i>)				
Theodore Taylor (<i>The Cay</i>)				
Robb White (<i>Deathwatch</i>)				

R=I've read this author
H=I've heard of this author (patron or colleague comments)

RA=I've read about this author (reviews, interviews etc.)
NH=I've never heard of this author

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Comics and Graphic Novels

A graphic novel is defined as a book-length story told in both words and pictures, with the premiere example being *Maus* by Art Spiegelman (winner of the 1992 Pulitzer Prize). Comics and graphic novels are hugely popular with teens and often conceal challenging plots and themes within an appealing, vivid format. Comics generally feature action heroes such as the X-Men or Spider-Man and are often collected into book-length volumes. Comics and graphic novels aimed at older teens or adults can be mature in theme, violent, and sexy, while collections for younger teens are more likely to feature television or movie favorites (*Sailor Moon*, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*), slapstick comedy, or classic superheroes. In the 1990s, the influence of Japanese artists reached America as readers discovered both animated films (anime) and comics (manga) from Japan.

Popular Authors and Titles

	R	RA	H	NH
Katherine Arnoldi (<i>The Amazing True Story of a Teenage Single Mom</i>) M				
Kurt Busiek (<i>Marvels</i>)				
Paul Chadwick (<i>Concrete</i>)				
Daniel Clowes (<i>Ghost World</i>)				
Will Eisner (<i>The Spirit</i>)				
Neil Gaiman (<i>The Sandman</i>)				
Yukito Kishiro (<i>Battle Angel Alita</i>)				
Frank Miller (<i>Batman: The Dark Knight Returns</i>)				
Alan Moore (<i>Watchmen</i>)				
Art Spiegelman (<i>Maus: A Survivor's Tale</i>) M				
Rumiko Takahashi (<i>Ranma ½</i>)				
Naoko Takeuchi (<i>Sailor Moon</i>)				
Virginia Walter (<i>Making Up Megaboy</i>)				
Judd Winick (<i>Pedro and Me</i>)				

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Contemporary Novels

Contemporary novels, sometimes called “problem” novels, are set in the here and now, allowing young readers to try on roles in their imaginations, such as inner city kid, gay teen, runaway, or star athlete. The writers unflinchingly face topics like eating disorders, date rape, drug addiction and family violence. Most teens either have faced these terrible challenges or know someone who has, and the novel can be a way to discover strategies and responses or simply breathe a sigh of relief to have escaped them. Contemporary fiction allows teen readers to feel less alone no matter what their situation.

Popular Authors and Titles

R RA H NH

Laurie Halse Anderson (<i>Speak</i>)				
Francesca Lia Block (<i>Weetzie Bat</i>)				
Melvin Burgess (<i>Smack</i>)	M			
Michael Cadnum (<i>Rundown</i>)				
Steve Chbosky (<i>The Perks of Being a Wallflower</i>)				
Robert Cormier (<i>The Chocolate War</i>)				
Chris Crutcher (<i>Staying Fat for Sarah Byrnes</i>)				
Sarah Dessen (<i>Dreamland</i>)				
Jean Ferris (<i>Eight Seconds</i>)				
Paul Fleischman (<i>Whirligig</i>)				
M. E. Kerr (<i>Deliver Us From Evie</i>)				
E. L. Konigsburg (<i>Silent to the Bone</i>)				
Steven Levenkron (<i>The Luckiest Girl in the World</i>)				
Norma Fox Mazer (<i>When She Was Good</i>)				
Lurlene McDaniel				
Louis Sachar (<i>Holes</i>)				
Beatrice Sparks (Anonymous)				
(<i>Go Ask Alice</i>)				
Virginia Euwer Wolff (<i>Make Lemonade</i>)				

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Fantasy

Fantasy is speculative fiction based on magic or myth. The plots usually emphasize journeys, whether psychological or physical, and stress the importance of human virtues through individual acts of courage, sacrifice, and kindness. Crossover reading between children's and adult fantasy fiction is continuous. Long-running series are very popular. One example is the Piers Anthony *Xanth* novels, begun in 1977 and still going strong today. Teen fantasy readers often tire of shorter tales and move on to the lengthy world-building of Robert Jordan and Terry Brooks.

Popular Authors and Titles

	R	RA	H	NH
Piers Anthony (<i>Xanth</i> series)				
Peter Beagle (<i>The Last Unicorn</i>)				
Terry Brooks (<i>The Sword of Shannara</i>)				
Orson Scott Card (<i>Alvin Maker</i> series)				
Charles De Lint (<i>Jack of Kinrowan</i>)				
David Eddings (<i>The Belgariad</i> series)				
Raymond Feist (<i>Riftwar</i> series)				
Brian Jacques (<i>Redwall</i>)				
Diana Wynne Jones (<i>Dark Lord of Derkholm</i>)				
Robert Jordan (<i>The Wheel of Time</i> series)				
Robin McKinley (<i>Beauty: A Retelling of the Story of Beauty and the Beast</i>)				
Donna Jo Napoli (<i>Zel</i>)				
Garth Nix (<i>Sabriel</i>)				
Tamora Pierce (<i>Sandry's Book</i>)				
Philip Pullman (<i>The Golden Compass</i>)				
J. K. Rowling (<i>Harry Potter</i> series)				
R. A. Salvatore (<i>Forgotten Realms</i> series)				
J. R. R. Tolkien (<i>Lord of the Rings</i>)				
Patricia Wrede (<i>Dealing with Dragons</i>)				
Jane Yolen (<i>Briar Rose</i>)				

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Historical Fiction

An historical novel is a story that is set at least a generation (25 years) prior to when it is written. In historical fiction the setting is extremely important – it evokes a feel for people and past events. These stories may center on real historical figures, real events, or fictional characters living in a particular time or setting. By reading historical fiction, teens can identify with lives and times of the past. The best authors writing in this genre have conducted extensive research to authenticate their novels' settings and details.

Popular Authors and Titles

	R	RA	H	NH
Avi (<i>The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle</i>)				
Eve Bunting (<i>SOS Titanic</i>)				
Karen Cushman (<i>Catherine, Called Birdy</i>)				
Paul Fleischman (<i>Saturnalia</i>)				
Karen Hesse (<i>Out of the Dust</i>)				
Kathryn Lasky (<i>Beyond the Burning Time</i>)				
Julius Lester (<i>Pharaoh's Daughter: A Novel of Ancient Egypt</i>)				
Scott O'Dell (<i>Sing Down the Moon</i>)				
Gary Paulsen (<i>Soldier's Heart: A Novel of the Civil War</i>)				
Ann Rinaldi (<i>The Second Bend in the River</i>)				
Graham Salisbury (<i>Under the Blood-Red Sun</i>)				
Mildred Taylor (<i>Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry</i>)				
Ellen Emerson White (<i>The Road Home</i>)				

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Humor

One of the most common requests Young Adult librarians hear is, “Give me something funny.” These novels are almost always contemporary stories in American settings with kids going about the all-important business of surviving adolescence. While they might have a touch of teenage angst, they showcase youthful optimism, sarcasm, and energy.

Popular Authors and Titles

	R	RA	H	NH
Joan Bauer (<i>Rules of the Road</i>)				
Beverly Keller (<i>The Amazon Papers</i>)				
Ron Koertge (<i>Confess-O-Rama</i>)				
Gordon Korman (<i>The Chicken Doesn't Skate</i>)				
Chris Lynch (<i>Slot Machine</i>)				
Paul Many (<i>These are the Rules</i>)				
Richard Peck (<i>Bel-Air Bambi and the Mall Rats</i>)				
Randy Powell (<i>The Whistling Toilets</i>)				
Louise Rennison (<i>Angus, Thongs and Full-Frontal Snogging: Confessions of Georgia Nicolson</i>)				
Jerry Spinelli (<i>Who Put That Hair in My Toothbrush?</i>)				
Todd Strasser (<i>How I Created My Perfect Prom Date</i>)				
Rob Thomas (<i>Slave Day</i>)				
Rachel Vail (<i>Wonder</i>)				

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Inspirational

Many teens discovered Inspirational Fiction with the adult *Left Behind* series. Publishers followed with an equally popular *Left Behind: The Kids* series. Less dramatic series in the *Sweet Valley* vein are popular. Their plotlines follow average kids with everyday problems, with the added element of Christian faith as part of the teen's support and moral compass. Generally, families are not part of the problem but are traditional and sympathetic.

	R	RA	H	NH
Popular Series				
Judy Baer (<i>Cedar River Daydreams</i>)				
Jerry B. Jenkins (<i>Left Behind: The Kids</i>)				
Tim F. LaHaye (<i>Left Behind</i>)				
Wendy Lee Nentwig (<i>Unmistakably Cooper Ellis</i>)				
Laura Peyton Roberts (<i>Clearwater Crossing</i>)				
Patricia H. Rushford (<i>Jennie McGrady Mysteries</i>)				

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Multicultural

Multicultural fiction is increasingly standard fare on school reading lists. These books look at cultures other than Anglo-Saxon American, bringing to vivid life Asian, African, Islamic, Native American and other social and religious groups. In urban communities, African-American or Hispanic authors may be more familiar and accessible to students than standard mainstream authors. Although some authors are writing about ethnic groups other than their own, most are writing at least in part about their own upbringing or family history.

Popular Authors and Titles

	R	RA	H	NH
Sherman Alexie (<i>The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven</i>)				
Julia Alvarez (<i>Before We Were Free</i>)				
Sandra Cisneros (<i>The House on Mango Street</i>)				
Sharon Draper (<i>Forged by Fire</i>)				
Louise Erdrich (<i>The Beet Queen</i>)				
E. R. Frank (<i>Life is Funny</i>) M				
Angela Johnson (<i>Toning the Sweep</i>)				
Gus Lee (<i>China Boy</i>)				
Kyoko Mori (<i>Shizuko's Daughter</i>)				
Walter Dean Myers (<i>Monster</i>)				
Lensey Namioka (<i>Ties that Bind, Ties that Break</i>)				
Graham Salisbury (<i>Under the Blood-Red Sun</i>)				
Sapphire (<i>Push</i>) M				
April Sinclair (<i>Coffee Will Make You Black</i>)				
Gary Soto (<i>Buried Onions</i>)				
Sister Souljah (<i>The Coldest Winter Ever</i>) M				
Suzanne Fisher Staples (<i>Shabanu, Daughter of the Wind</i>)				
Susan Straight (<i>Blacker Than a Thousand Midnights</i>) M				
Jacqueline Woodson (<i>If You Come Softly</i>)				
Laurence Yep (<i>The Cook's Family</i>)				

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Mystery, Suspense and Horror

In Young Adult fiction, these three genres blend and merge into what teen librarians often call “chillers.” Younger readers often lead off with the *Goosebumps* or *Fear Street* series, and then move on to more sophisticated fare. True detective stories are rare in Young Adult fiction, though young mystery fans may enjoy some of the classic novels of Agatha Christie and Ngaio Marsh.

Popular Authors and Titles

	R	RA	H	NH
V. C. Andrews				
Orson Scott Card (<i>Lost Boys</i>)				
Caroline B. Cooney (<i>Flash Fire</i>)				
Lois Duncan (<i>Killing Mr. Griffin</i>)				
Christopher Golden (<i>Bodybags</i>)				
Stephen King (<i>Carrie</i>)				
Annette Curtis Klause (<i>Blood and Chocolate</i>)				
Dean R. Koontz (<i>Watchers</i>)				
Margaret Mahy (<i>The Changeover: A Supernatural Romance</i>)				
Joan Lowery Nixon				
Christopher Pike				
Carol Plum-Ucci (<i>The Body of Christopher Creed</i>)				
Marsha Qualey (<i>Close to a Killer</i>)				
R. L. Stine				
Nancy Werlin (<i>The Killer's Cousin</i>)				
Paul Zindel (<i>Reef of Death</i>)				

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Romance

Unlike adult romance novels, these stories do not guarantee a happy ending. Often focusing on first love, the stories can be bittersweet, while capturing the immediacy and power of teen passion. There is occasionally crossover between problem novels, as young lovers face obstacles of race, social status, or sexual identity.

Popular Authors and Titles

	R	RA	H	NH
Joan Bauer (<i>Thwonk</i>)				
Judy Blume (<i>Forever</i>)				
Catherine Clark (<i>Truth or Dairy</i>)				
Ellen Conford (<i>Crush</i>)				
Paula Danziger (<i>Remember Me to Harold Square</i>)				
Sarah Dessen (<i>Keeping the Moon</i>)				
Sharon Draper (<i>Romiette and Julio</i>)				
Lucy Frank (<i>Will You be My Brussels Sprout?</i>)				
Carolyn Mackler (<i>Love and Other Four- Letter Words</i>)				
Louise Plummer (<i>The Unlikely Romance of Kate Bjorkman</i>)				
Sara Ryan (<i>Empress of the World</i>)				
Carol Lynch Williams (<i>My Angelica</i>)				
Karen RomanoYoung (<i>The Beetle and Me: A Love Story</i>)				

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Science Fiction

Studies show that most lifelong readers of science fiction and fantasy discover the genre in their early teens. These readers like the ultimate escape to another world, time or universe. Science fiction also tends to have less graphic language, violence or sex than much genre fiction, and so young readers can and do “read up” into adult novels.

Popular Authors

	R	RA	H	NH
Douglas Adams (<i>Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy</i>)				
Orson Scott Card (<i>Ender’s Game</i>)				
Kimberly Fuller (<i>Home</i>)				
Kate Gilmore (<i>The Exchange Student</i>)				
Steven Gould (<i>Wildside</i>)				
Margaret Peterson Haddix (<i>Running Out of Time</i>)				
Pete Hautman (<i>Mr. Was</i>)				
Brian Herbert (<i>Dune: House Atreides</i>)				
James P. Hogan (<i>Bug Park</i>)				
Greg Keyes (<i>Newton’s Cannon</i>)				
Nancy Kress (<i>Beggars in Spain</i>)				
Lois Lowry (<i>The Giver</i>)				
Anne McCaffrey (<i>Dragonsinger</i>)				
Garth Nix (<i>Shade’s Children</i>)				
Karl Schroeder (<i>Ventus</i>)				
Charles Sheffield (<i>Higher Education: A Jupiter Novel</i>)				
Gloria Skurzynski (<i>Virtual War</i>)				
William Sleator (<i>Interstellar Pig</i>)				

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Sports

Sports and athletes in fiction are often a strong appeal factor for teen readers, particularly boys. The familiar setting of a basketball or hockey game can draw the reader into a story of friendship, racism, or loneliness. Increasingly, Young Adult fiction features female athletes and their achievements.

Popular Authors and Titles

R RA H NH

Margaret Bechard (*If It Doesn't Kill You*)

Cherie Bennett (*Girls in Love*)

Thomas Cochran (*Roughnecks*)

Chris Crutcher (*Athletic Shorts: Six Short Stories*)

Carl Deuker (*Night Hoops*)

Tessa Duder (*In Lane Three, Alex Archer*)

Thomas Dygard (*Second Stringer*)

Jean Ferris (*Eight Seconds*)

Chris Lynch (*Iceman*)

Walter Dean Myers (*Slam!*)

Jerry Spinelli (*There's a Girl in My Hammerlock*)

Cynthia Voigt (*The Runner*)

Rich Wallace (*Playing Without the Ball: A Novel in Four Quarters*)

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